

Dear Dave,

9/27/90

As you may recall, I read the papers early, mark what I want clipped, and after she reads them Lil does the clipping. Sometimes she accumulates a stack before she clips and that happened with a long article by James Schlessinger that I do not remember ~~xxx~~ reading and may have, because it was rather longer, intended to read later. It was published 8/5/90 and I enclose a copy.

Schlessinger had headed Defense, ~~Base~~ Energy and the CIA, so he qualifies as an expert on the Saddamnable crisis. Which it turns out he had predicted to the White House several weeks before it happened.

I don't intended to repeat lengthy excerpts because you can read it for yourself but I do note that I have been saying that it should have been expected and should have been prepared for as well as trying to prevent it.

"No one ~~should~~ have been surprised that the invasion came when it did," he says. And "the possibility ~~xxxxxx~~ was clearly indicated by the sequence of events."

And rather than Saddam's justification being the fact, he having claimed that Kuwait was over-producing the driving the price of oil down, Kuwait had agreed not to overproduce, as had the other emirates, in early July. But it was on July 18. or later, that Saddam "issued his thunderous accusations and threats and began menacingly to move his forces."

He says that by taking Kuwait Saddam "could make himself master of 70 billion barrels of proven reserves (and probably much more), almost double his daily production capacity, eliminate some of his indebtedness and ease dramatically the problem of servicing the remaining debt."

This was written before the Saudis invited the US military in to defend it and before the embargo ^{was} voted at the UN. Schlessinger thinks the embargo will not be effective and will be costly. He accurately forecast the price per barrel to soon reach \$40, which it did, and I hope not accurately predicted that many countries would not observe it. *The embargo.*

Much has happened since he wrote this article and we'll see how accurate his forecasts are about the effects of the blockade and the costs.

I have two points in mind. One of that when the possibility if not the probability of Saddam's invasion was so apparent from what was known publicly how could it not have been included in intelligence and political analyses? The other is whether or not there was no intelligence failure and as some seem to suspect what came to pass is what the Bush administration wanted to happen, to divert attention from its serious domestic problems for which it has no solutions. I did not suspect this, although in retrospect I should have.

A Hobson's choice. Either is terrible.

Best,